

The Exact Science  
of Matrimony

"As I have told you before," said Jeff Peters, "I never had much confidence in the perfidiousness of woman. As partners or co-educators in the most innocent line of graft they are not trustworthy."

"They deserve the compliment," said I. "I think they deserve to be called the honest sex."

"Why shouldn't they be?" said Jeff. "They've got the other sex either grafting or working overtime for 'em. They're all right in business until they get their emotions or their hair touched up too much. Then you want to have a first-class, heavy-breathing man with sandy whiskers, five kids and a building and loan mortgage ready as an understudy to take her desk. Now there was that widow lady that me and Andy Tucker engaged to help us in that little matrimonial agency scheme we floated out in Cairo."

"When you've got enough advertising capital—say, a roll as big as the little end of a wagon tongue—there is money in matrimonial agencies. We had about \$5,000 and we expected to double it in two months, which is about as long as a scheme like ours can be carried on without taking out a New Jersey charter."

"We fixed up an advertisement that read something like this:

"Charming widow, beautiful, home loving, 32 years, possessing \$3,000 cash and owning valuable country property, would re-marry. Would prefer a poor man with affectionate disposition to one with means, as she realizes that the solidest virtues are often to be found in the humble walks of life. No objection to elderly man or one of homely appearance if faithful and true and competent to manage property and invest money with judgment. Address with particulars, 'LONELY,' Cairo, Ill."

"Care of Peters & Tucker, Agents, Cairo, Ill."

"So far, so pernicious," says I, "when we had finished the literary convention. And now," says I, "where is the lady?"

"Andy gives me one of his looks of calm irritation."

"Jeff," says he, "I thought you had lost them ideas of realism in your art. Why should there be a lady? When they sell you a lot of watered stock on Wall street would you expect to find a mermaid in it? What has a matrimonial ad got to do with a lady?"

"Now, listen," says I, "you know my rule, Andy, that in all my illegitimate inquiries against the letter of the

legal letter of the law the article sold must be existent, visible, producible. In that way and by a careful study of city ordinances and train schedules I have kept out of all trouble with the police that a five dollar bill and a cigar could not square. Now, to work this scheme, we've got to be able to produce bodily a charming widow or its equivalent without the beauty, hereditaments and appurtenances set forth in the catalogue and writ of errors, or hereafter be held by a justice of the peace."

"Well," says Andy, reconstructing his mind, "maybe it would be safer in case the postoffice or the peace commission should try to investigate our agency. But where," he says, "could you hope to find a widow who would waste time on a matrimonial scheme that had no matrimony in it?"

"I told Andy that I thought I knew of the exact party. An old friend of mine, Zeke Trotter, who used to draw soda water and teeth in a tent show, had made his wife a widow a year before by drinking some dyspepsia cure of the old doctor's instead of the liniment that he always got boozed up on. I used to stop at their house often, and I thought we could get her to work with us."

"Is this an honest deal you are putting on, Mr. Peters," she asks me when I tell her what we want."

"Mrs. Trotter," says I, "Andy Tucker and me have computed the calculation that 2,000 men in this broad and unfair country will endeavor to secure your fair hand and ostensible money and property through our advertisement. Out of that number, something like thirty hundred will expect to give you in exchange, if they should win you, the carcass of a lazy and mercenary loafer, a failure in life—a swindler and contemptible fortune-seeker."

"Me and Andy," says I, "propose to teach these preys upon society a lesson. It was with difficulty," says I, "that me and Andy could refrain from forming a corporation under the title of the Great Moral and Millennial Malevolent Matrimonial Agency. Does that satisfy you?"

"It does," Mr. Peters," she says. "I might have known you wouldn't have gone into anything that wasn't opprobrious. But what will my duties be? Do I have to reject personally these 3,000 ranscellions you speak of, or can I throw them out in bunches?"

"Your job," Mrs. Trotter, says I, "will be practically a consensual. You will live at a quiet hotel and will have

no work to do. Andy and me will attend to all of the correspondence and business end of it."

"Of course," says I, "some of the more ardent and impetuous suitors who can raise the railroad fare may come to Cairo to personally press their

suit or whatever fraction of a suit they may be wearing. In that case you will probably be put to the inconvenience of kissing them out face to face. We will pay you \$25 a week and hotel expenses."

"Give me five minutes," says Mrs. Trotter, "to get my powder rag and leave the front door key with a neighbor and you can let my salary begin."

"So I convey Mrs. Trotter to Cairo and establishes her in a family hotel far enough away from me and Andy's quarters to be unsuspicious and available, and I tell Andy:

"Great," says Andy, "and now that your conscience is appeased as to the tangibility and proximity of the bait, and leaving mutton aside, suppose we renege a 'too fish'."

"So we began to insert our advertisement in newspapers covering the country far and wide. One ad was all we used. We couldn't have used more without being so many clerks and marcelled paraphernalia that the sound of the gun chewing would have disturbed the postmaster general."

"We placed \$2,000 in a bank to Mrs. Trotter's credit and gave her the book to show in case anybody might question the honesty and good faith of the agency. I knew Mrs. Trotter was on the square and reliable, and it was safe to leave it in her name."

"With that one ad Andy and me put in twelve hours a day answering letters."

"About 100 a day was what came in. I never knew there were so many large-hearted but indigent men in the country who were willing to acquire a charming widow and assume the burden of investing her money."

"Most of them admitted that they came principally to whiskers and lost



"ABOUT 100 A DAY WAS WHAT CAME IN."

jobs and were misunderstood by the world, but all of 'em were sure they were so chuck full of affection and mainly qualities that the widow would be making the bargain of her life to get 'em."

"Every applicant got a reply from Peters & Tucker informing him that the widow had been deeply impressed by his straightforwardness and interesting letter, and requesting them to write again, stating more particulars and enclosing photograph if convenient. Peters & Tucker also informed the applicant that their fee for handling over the second letter to their fair client would be \$2, enclosed therewith."

"There you see the simple beauty of the scheme. About 90 per cent of them domestic foreign noblemen got the price somehow and sent it in. Except that me and Andy complained an amount about being put to the trouble of slicing open their envelopes and taking the money out, that's all there was to it."

"Some few clients called in person. We sent 'em to Mrs. Trotter and she did the rest, except for three or four who came back to strike us for car fare. After the letters began to get in from the R. F. D. districts Andy and me were taking in about \$200 a day."

"One afternoon when we were busy and I was stuffing the ones and twos into cigar boxes and Andy was whistling 'No Wedding Bells for Her,' a small, slick man drops in and runs his eye over the walls like he was on the trail of a lost Gainsborough painting or two. As soon as I saw him I felt a glow of pride, because we were running our business on the level."

"I see you have a large mail today," says the man.

"I reached and got my hat."

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"Come on," says I, "We've been expecting you. We've got the goods. How was Teddy when you left Washington?"

"I took him down to the Riverview hotel and had him shake hands with Mrs. Trotter. Then I showed him her bank book with the \$2,000 to her credit."

"It seems to be all right," says the secret service.

"It is," says I, "and if you are not a married man, I'll leave you to talk a while with the lady. We won't mention the \$2."

"Thanks," says he, "if I wasn't I might. Good day, Mr. Peters."

"Toward the end of three months we had taken in something over \$50,000, and we saw it was time to quit. We had a good many complaints made to us; and Mrs. Trotter seemed to be tired of the job. A good many suitors had been calling to see her and she didn't seem to like that."

"So we decided to pull out and I goes down to Mrs. Trotter's hotel to pay her last week's wages and say farewell and get her check for the \$2,000."

"When I got there I found her crying like a kid that didn't want to go to school."

"Now, now," says I, "what's it all about. Somebody sassed you or are you getting homesick?"

"No, Mr. Peters," says she, "I'll tell you. You was always a friend of Zeke's and I don't mind, Mr. Peters, I'm in love. I love a man just so hard I can't bear not to get him. He's just the ideal I've always had in mind."

"Then take him," says I, "that is, if it's a mutual case. Does he return the sentiment according to the specifications and painfulness you have described?"

"I reached and got my hat."

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"Then take him," says I, "that is, if it's a mutual case. Does he return the sentiment according to the specifications and painfulness you have described?"

"I reached and got my hat."

"He does," says she, "but he's one of the gentlemen that's been comin' to see me about the advertisement and he won't marry me unless I give him the \$2,000. His name is William Wilkinson. And then she goes off again in the agitations and hysterics of romance."

"Mrs. Trotter," says I, "there's no man more sympathetic with a woman's affections that I am. Besides, you was once a life partner of one of my best friends. If it was left to me I'd say take the \$2,000 and the man of your choice and be happy."

"We could afford to do that because we have cleared up over \$5,000 from these suckers that wanted to marry you. But," says I, "Andy Tucker is to be consulted."

"He is a good man, but keen in business. He is my equal partner financially. I will talk to Andy," says I, "and see what can be done."

"I goes back to our hotel and lays the case before Andy."

"I was expecting something like this all the time," says Andy. "You can't trust a woman to stick by you in any scheme that involves her emotions and preferences."

"It's a sad thing," says I, "to think that we've been the cause of the breaking of a woman's heart."

"It is," says Andy, "and I'll tell you what I'm willing to do, Jeff. You've always been a man of a soft and generous heart and disposition. Perhaps I've been too hard and worldly and suspicious. For once I'll meet you half way. Go to Mrs. Trotter and tell her to draw the \$2,000 from the bank and give it to this man she's infatuated with and be happy."

"I jumps up and shakes Andy's hand for five minutes and then I goes back to Mrs. Trotter and tells her. And she cries as hard for joy as she did for sorrow."

"Two days afterward me and Andy packs up to go."

"Wouldn't you like to go down and meet Mrs. Trotter once more before we leave?" I asks him. "She'd like mighty to know you and to express her condolences and gratitude."

"Why," I guess not," says Andy. "I guess we'd better hurry and catch that train."

"I was strapping our capital around me in a money belt like we always carried it, when Andy pulls a roll of large bills out of his pocket and asks me to put 'em with the rest."

"What's this?" says I.

"It's Mrs. Trotter's \$2,000," says Andy.

"How do you come to have it?" I asks.

"She gave it to me," says Andy. "I have been calling on her these evenings a week for more than a month."

"Then you are William Wilkinson," says I.

"I was," says Andy.

"WORTH WAITING FOR."

(Woman's Home Companion.)

An old gentleman, rather portly and clad in a somewhat youthful suit of light gray flannel, sat on a bench in the park enjoying the spring day.

"What's the matter, sonny?" he asked a small urchin who sat on the grass just across the walk and stared intently. "Why don't you go and play?"

"But it is not natural," the old gentleman insisted, "for a boy to be so quiet. Why don't you run about?"

"Oh, I'm just waiting," the little fellow answered. "I'm just waitin' till you get up. A man pointed that bench about fifteen minutes ago!"

CAUSE FOR CONGRATULATION.

(Brooklyn Life.)

Alice—And she refused him after all the encouragement she gave him?

May—Well, it is fortunate that we do not have to marry every one to whom we give encouragement.

WHERE THEY BUMP THE BUMPS.

(London Times.)

In Tooting, a London suburb, are two villas, side by side. One is named "Lodino" and the other "Arnica."

"I suppose you can't stop people from gambling, I don't know that I would if I end. It seems to take their minds off their more coarse ways of makin' money, like wurruk an' business. Money is a very pleasant thing to have an' 'tis too bad when we have to associate such a delightful household companion with gettin' up early in th' mornin' an' carryin' a hod all day or sellin' a dollar an' a half's worth iv shoes fr' two dollars. But th' money ye get be gamblin' has no such associations. It thrills lightly an' laughingly up to ye, ye keep it around with ye fr' a day or two an' then it goes back home. Th' money ye make be wurruk is like a member iv th' family. Ye feel responsible fr' it. Ye don't like to see it go out nights. But th' money ye make be gamblin' is like a visitor that's on'y goin' to stay awhile an' that frequently asks ye out to have a drink."

"Well," said Hennessy, "I've heard it said that all life's a gamble."

"It is," said Mr. Dooley, "but it ain't a bad idea when ye set into th' game to learn how to play it an' to cut th' cards deep."

## Mr. Dooley on the Sport of Kings

By F. P. Dunne

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"Have ye ever been to a horse race?" Mr. Hennessy asked.

"Wanst," said Mr. Dooley, "an' wanst only. But mind ye I know about racin'."

"I've got to. I'd lose a great deal in thrade if I wasn't expert in ivry branch iv human knowledge. They talk about college professors bein' underpaid. But how about our retail liquor dealers? A college professor spills careless thoughts out his head to mere childer that don't dare to fight back. Ye never heard iv a misinformed graduate returnin' after five years to whack his professor in th' eye because he'd been taught that a man can make a fortune writin' poetry fr' th' pa-pers."

But my classes at-re composed iv able-bodied men, many iv thim far advanced in drinkin, an' I've got to know what I'm talkin' about, an' that's hard, an' I've got to know what they're talkin' about, an' that's almost impossible."

"So I've followed th' racin' news an' I know about th' performances iv th' kings and queens iv th' turf. In th' spring I read: 'Forty thousand people yesterday acclaimed th' gr-great Gundroph, mighty son iv a worthy sire. King iv th' turf. Hats off to Gundroph. Wearin' blinders an' a muzzle to keep him fr'm jumpin' over th' fence or atin' th' starter an' mercilessly lashed be that peerless jockey till Billy Flinn, t' h'monarch iv th' sport iv kings be a supreme burst iv speed vanquished th' gallant Stuff II an' th' sturdy Pickled-be-night an' even compelled th' hither-to invincible Maud H. Schmittschmitt to bow her lovely head in defeat. After th' race th' proud owner iv th' mighty son iv a worthy sire, A. Bliff, former prince iv wire tappers, rayfused three million dollars fr' this mighty son iv a worthy sire."

"At wanst me attention is centered on Gundroph. I talk a good deal about him to wayfarin' sportin' men who

come in here fr' drink and knowledge. I watch the pa-pers close fr' th' day when I'll see: 'Mighty throng cheers peerless Gundroph to victory.' Instead iv that I see: 'Gundroph, off badly, got a poor ride, was knocked out iv his stride at th' turn an' had no speed.' Th' next week it's: 'Gundroph, off well, was badly handled.' Th' next: 'Gundroph too fast fr' Gundroph.' An' finally: 'Glue wurruks Elimination Thirle: Fr horses that were better dead; thirty dollars added; selling: Gundroph ran like th' dog he is an' finished absolutely last.' An' th' next winter I run across this item in th' pa-pers:

"Few iv th' manny sportin' men who pass through th' union deapo ivry day on their way to wurruk know that Gundroph th' wanst mighty king iv th' turf is now connected with wain iv th' cabs near th' main entrance an' can be seen hidin' his blushes in a nose bag. Th' former mighty son iv a worthy sire is owned by I. Doherty, who bet much money on him an' natchrally has a great affection fr' him. He says he is almost even with him now an' soon expects to shoot him."

"An' so they go. Th' turf romances don't last long. There are more kings an' queens iv th' turf in wanst season than there are presidents iv France, an' that's a good many. But it's a grand sport, an' which Hogan asked me to go an' see it I wint. 'Twas wain iv these fine summer's days when ye feel like a flannel shirt in th' wash, an' I was wanderin' what shape I'd be in when I cooled. Hogan burst through th' dure with a telescope hung round his neck an' says he: 'Why d'ye stick indures such a day? Come out an' breathe th' fresh air,' he says, 'an' injive th' sport iv kings. I've got a good thing in th' first race,' he says. 'Not,' he says, 'that I care annythin' about that. Bettin' is th' poorest feature iv racin'. 'Tis th'

open air, th' fresh breezes, th' clear sky, th' crowds iv happy, careless people spendin' a day free fr'm care an' worry midst, he says, 'pleasant surroundings.' he says, 'watchin' th' mighty heroes iv th' turf contendin' fr' gin'rous mastery, an' he says, 'maybe heroes in a little money fr' Hogan,' he says."

"So I wint. Goin' to th' sport iv kings, Hennessy, is much th' same as goin' to a picnic iv the Steamfitters' union. We rode on a street car as long as they'd let us fr' 5 cents an' thim we boosted ourselves into a railroad car that's been kindly lent to th' passenger department be th' general freight agent fr' th' occasion. An' away we bumped. Th' car was filled to th' dew point with what Hogan calls volthives iv th' sport iv kings. I thought I recognized some fellow members iv th' Retail Liquor Dealers' Protective an' Bimivalent Association an' rot a few customers iv th' same. All th' arrystocracy an' gentry had their coats off. Fair women added gayety to th' scene. Manny iv thim were just off their private yachts an' still had on their yachtin' caps. Their faces were flushed with happiness an' wore th' pained but hunted expression iv mothers that have busted into baby's bank with a can opener."

"We moved cheerily along through th' pleasant suburban scenery with vjstas iv th' packin' house, Broderick's glue factory, th' palachal homes iv th' bone-dust industry an' smilin' miles iv city dumps. As I hung airily to a pair iv blue suspenders in front iv me while a patrician behind me used me back fr' a desk to mark his program, I heard th' flow iv light an' careless conversation. 'He'll win if they haven't poisoned him,' I lose eighty on him last time. If I don't get it back today there'll be a new face at th' cashier's window.' 'Hello, Mike, whin did ye get out?' An' so on. 'A typical light-hearted holiday crowd,' says I, puttin' me watch in me boot."

"Whin we arrived at th' thrack I felt me heart beatin' fast. If ye niver saw a race thrack, Hennessy, ye can hardly imagine what it looks like. How can I describe it to ye beyond sayin' that it is something like a coal yard. Picture, if ye will, miles on miles iv stately board fence, some iv it tastefully painted brown an' some iv it tastefully not painted at all. Outside are th' handsome stables, or ye might say, sheds, where th' equine heroes are-nourished fr' their thrilles iv speed an' endurance. It was me happiness to see th' nursery iv th' mighty Running Yet who wud've won th' Blithers if he hadn't got dependent about th' odds."

"Inside th' scene was even more fascinating. A gentle breeze blew across th' swamp in th' middle iv th' coorse fr'm th' adjacent switch yard. Th' sun was reflected in a thousand mud puddles on th' coorse. The grand stand was filled with happy people, yellin'. 'Set down there.' 'Why don't ye look where ye're goin'?' 'I'll knock ye black off, bo, if ye're not careful.' 'What d'ye hear?' 'Tomorrow honest. Ye can take me watch if ye don't believe me.' An enormous force iv policemen were busy rescuin' vast hordes iv pickpockets fr'm th' bettin' ring. Th' ninety bartenders were wurrukin' like th' fire department at a fire in a lard factory. It was fine."

"Where are th' horses?" says I. "Oh, niver mind thim," says Hogan. "Let's go in an' look at th' odds. An' he bundled me into th' bettin' ring. Most iv th' gentlemen I'd met on th' thrain an' a few more were there. What were they doin'? Ye can't guess. Ye niver wuld imagine it. They were in th' bettin' ring to take th' money away fr'm th' bookmakers. Wud ye believe it that there shud be people so lost to th' beauties iv nature an' so lackin' in th' spirit iv sport that they shud be

usin' this here great enterprise fr' th' improvement iv th' breed iv horses to skin money out of these enforchment publishers. But so it was. An' they were doin' it iv th' meanest way ye can imagine. Fr ivry wain iv these pufferers had private information that th' book-makers cudden't get hold iv on account iv th' confined nature iv their employment. Some iv them had got it out iv th' mornin' pa-pers, some iv them had bought it fr' five cents fr'm a spy on th' thrain, an' others had dreamed it."

"I'm sorry to say that Hogan was th' worst iv th' lot. 'Tis a beautiful day," says I. 'It is that, Hogan. I'll go home with money in me ears,' he says. An' he fought his way up to where a poor fellow iv a thrille long persecuted be our so-called civilization was absent-mindedly blowin' on a dimon ring to cool it off. 'What are ye goin' to do?' says I. 'Tincan can't lose in th' first race,' says Hogan. 'I got it straight fr'm th' stable.' 'But,' says I, 'Is this right? Here ye have be supercyor cunning gained private knowledge be means iv which ye are goin' to deprive wain iv ye'er fellow men iv his little savings. Is it just?' says I. 'Is it fair? Is it hon'rab'le? Is it manly?' He gave no heed to what I said, but called out: 'Ten on Tincan.' Th' poor fellow looked far away an' remarked to a young friend who was settin' alongside as he dropped Hogan's ten on a pile iv Cortlyon's masterpieces in th' flure: 'Thirteen thousand to ten, Tincan. Maxey, I'm afraid we're goin' to have another shower an' I have no top on me automobile.'"

"We wint up in th' grand stand to see th' race. They're at th' post," says Hogan. 'Where?' says I. 'Over there,' says he, pointin' to where a group of horses were kickin' each other. 'That wain near th' fence is Tincan. He's in good spirits,' says he. 'He is that,'

he thinks th' race is th' other way round. Now that fellow has caught him an' is towing him up to th' start. Another man is bettin' him with a whip. Now he's thriled to bite his jockey's leg off. Now he's kickin' th' horse next to him. Glory he, but he's th' fine mettlesome cratcher. Did ye ever think iv buyin' him an' keepin' him in th' house?' says I. Hogan made no reply but gave a low painful moan: 'They're off.' Fr'm that time on I was savin' me new hat fr'm th' purple parasol iv th' lady settin' next to me. Th' moment th' race started she threw off all reserve an' manny iv her hair pins an' began batin' me new hat. 'Come on,' says th' lady. 'Come on, you Finkydoo. Come on, you seal. Oh, you Finkydoo,' says she, lashing away at me new hat. An' thim she swooned away. That's all I seen iv the race. I looked over at Hogan. His face was light green in color. He was crumplin' up his program with wain hand an' twistin' a button on his coat with th' other. An' I left him there an' wint away to find a place where me new hat wudden't be in danger."

"I found it over in a corner iv th' coorse where th' owner iv th' thrack was settin' in th' shade iv th' fence readin' th' advertisements iv his new copper mine. I knew him well. He owns th' Temple iv Chance where Hogan whiles away his salary in th' winter. 'Why ain't ye out lookin' at th' horses run?' says I. 'I don't like horse racin',' says he. 'My wurruk is through whin I've counted up th' box office. 'Ain't ye intrrested in improvin' th' breed iv horses?' says I. 'No more,' says he, 'thin I am in improvin' th' breed iv faro boxes. I can't see anny difference between thim. They're only another way iv honest men gettin' what's comin' to thim. Take ye'er frind Hogan. He thinks he's intrrested

in th' horses. But what he's really intrrested in is whether me young an' enterprisin' colleague Mose Einstein will give him back his ten an' some besides. Ye didn't see anny difference in his expression whin Tincan lost today an' whin th' svin sport lost last winter. 'Tis all th' same, me boy. Close up that there bettin' ring an' ye'd have more people at wain iv thim's plays thim at a race thrack. If th' varechous farmer down th' state didn't support his country fairs with a little pool sellin' in th' throuters, I'd subdivid this here thrack an' sell th' lots to th' patrons iv th' bucket show. Has Hogan lost much so far?' 'He's lost th' on'y bet he's made,' says I. 'He's doin' very well fr' Hogan,' says he."

"I suppose ye can't stop people from gambling, I don't know that I would if I end. It seems to take their minds off their more coarse ways iv makin' money, like wurruk an' business. Money is a very pleasant thing to have an' 'tis too bad when we have to associate such a delightful household companion with gettin' up early in th' mornin' an' carryin' a hod all day or sellin' a dollar an' a half's worth iv shoes fr' two dollars. But th' money ye get be gamblin' has no such associations. It thrills lightly an' laughingly up to ye, ye keep it around with ye fr' a day or two an' then it goes back home. Th' money ye make be wurruk is like a member iv th' family. Ye feel responsible fr' it. Ye don't like to see it go out nights. But th' money ye make be gamblin' is like a visitor that's on'y goin' to stay awhile an' that frequently asks ye out to have a drink."

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